



MARKET HARBOROUGH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

Health and Sanitary State of
the District for the year

1949

BY

S. P. STOKER, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

B. G. ELLIOTT, M.R.San.I.,
SANITARY INSPECTOR.



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 ANNUAL REPORT
 of the Medical Officer of Health and the
 Sanitary Inspector for 1949.

GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to present our Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1949.

STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	4,771
Population (Registrar General's Estimate) ...	10,500
Number of inhabited houses	3,148
Rateable Value	£66,447
Sum represented by penny rate	£264

INDUSTRIES.

The industries in the town continue to be fully employed and no new industries have been started during the year.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Male.	Female.	Total
Live Births: Legitimate	101	75	176
Illegitimate	9	5	14
	110	80	190
Still Births: Legitimate	3	3	6
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	3	3	6
Deaths of infants under 1 year: Legitimate	5	1	6
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	5	1	6
Deaths (all ages)	63	62	125

			England and Wales.	1949	1948	1949
Live Birth Rate	(Per 1,000 population):			18.1	17.12	16.7
Still Birth Rate	(,, ,,, ,,,):			0.57	0.47	0.39
Death Rate	(,, ,,, ,,,):			12.2	10.44	11.7
Infant Mortality Rate	(,, ,,, live births):			31.6	28.25	32.0

Population :—There was an increase of 160 persons over last year's figures.

Death Rate :—An increase of 1.8 per 1,000 brought the average death rate slightly above that of the country as a whole.

Birth Rate :—Shows a slight increase on the previous year and is 1.0 per 1,000 above the average.

Infant Mortality Rate :—There is an increase on last year's figure and it is slightly below the average.

Puerperal Fever :—There were no deaths from puerperal causes.

Causes of Death :—The chief causes of death were:—

Cancer	...	...	...	...	25
Cerebral Haemorrhage				...	16
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	30
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	6
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	4

There were no deaths from other infectious diseases, infantile diarrhoea or road accidents.

HEALTH SERVICES.

Laboratory Facilities :—The following examinations were carried out by the Public Health Laboratory Service:—

Throat and Nose swabs	...	...	...	...	7
Faeces and Urine	...	...	...	...	16
Blood	...	...	...	...	6
Sputa	...	...	...	...	24
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	1

Other Health Services :—

The Day Nursery,
District Midwifery and Home Nursing,
Ante-Natal Clinics,
Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic,
Health Visiting,

Diphtheria Immunisation,
Ambulance Service and
Home Help Service

have been under the administration of the County Health Authority for the whole of the year. Under this Authority the local doctors are on call for the Midwifery Service and the Ante-Natal Clinics, and carry out the Diphtheria immunisation. 164 children received primary immunisation and 31 received the "booster" dose.

The Market Harborough and District Hospital and St. Lukes Hospital, under the administration of Leicester No. 1 Hospital Management Committee, were attended by the local doctors.

Health Services Officers:—

- 1 Medical Officer of Health (Part-time).
- 1 Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time).
- 1 Additional Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time, commenced July 1st).

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water:— The public piped water supply of the district has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity throughout the year. Ten samples of treated water going into supply were submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological examination and one sample for chemical analysis. All reports were satisfactory, excepting one of the former, which was only doubtful in one of three tubes. The water is free from any tendency to plumbo-solvent action.

A copy of the report of the Leicestershire County Council, dated 15th December, 1949, regarding the last sample from the town main, is appended:—

"Coliform organisms absent in 10 c.c.'s."

No extension of public water supplies has been carried out during the year, but a commencement has been made with main laying on the Southern Estate. The engineering data and plans for the proposed additional works at Bosworth Hall Estate were submitted to the Ministry of Health, but further progress awaits settlement of the provisional financial agreement with the estate owner.

The present supply to dwelling-houses in the district is as follows:—

	Houses.	Population.
Number supplied from wells	45	150
Number supplied from public water mains:—		
(a) Direct to the houses	2,914	9,713
(b) By means of stand-pipes	191	637

Twenty-one samples of water from private wells, which serve forty-five houses, were submitted to chemical tests for the presence of pollution, and all were found to be satisfactory.

Drainage and Sewerage:—New sewers have been laid for 3,200 yards on the first section of the Southern Estate streets. An additional main outfall sewer and the reconstruction of the disposal works are on the Council's programme for consideration as soon as circumstances allow.

Closet Accommodation:—During the year, seventy-one additional water closets have been constructed, and the total number connected to the sewerage system is now 4,404 approximately. Twenty outlying properties beyond the reach of the main sewers have sanitary accommodation of the conservancy type.

Public Cleansing:—Regular attention is given to the provision and maintenance of dustbins at all houses and other premises, and 137 new dustbins were provided by owners in response to requests sent in instances where replacement was necessary. Domestic refuse is collected weekly as far as possible, two S.D. freighter motor vehicles being in use for the purpose (1 full-time and 1 part-time). The approximate quantity of refuse received at the Council's Destructor Depot was 3,141 tons, of which the following articles were salvaged:—

			Tons.	Cwts.
Paper	...	...	27	12
Metals	...	...	81	0
Textiles	...	...	18	13
Bottles and Jars	...	...	—	—
Bones	...	...	7	7
			—	—
			134	12
			—	—

The above total is slightly higher than the previous year.

An arrangement exists for the collection of trade refuse from 66 shops, for which charges are made in accordance with the Council's Scale.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Complaints received and investigated	...	...	374
Defects or nuisances dealt with	...	...	562
Informal notices served	...	...	270
Statutory notices served	...	...	0

Inspections:—

				1st. Visits.	2nd. Visits.
Animal Keeping	...	...	...	27	7
Bakehouses	...	...	...	4	2
Dairies and Cowsheds	...	...	...	14	106
Dwelling Houses	...	...	...	406	451
Factories, etc.	...	...	...	32	17
Food Premises	...	...	...	79	148
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	4	16
Rats and Mice Destruction	...	...	3,614	1,911	
Shops	...	...	...	5	3
Slaughter House and Meat Inspection			1	371	
Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.	...	...	5	5	
Verminous Premises	...	...	127	117	
Water Supplies	...	...	22	0	
Other Premises	...	...	65	95	
			4,405	3,249	
				—	—

Dwelling Houses:—

General structural repairs effected	...	...	...	22
Drains and sanitary fittings repaired and new provided				46
Dustbins provided	...	...	...	137
Cleansing and other defects remedied	...	...	...	13
Licences renewed under Defence Regulation 68AA	...			2

Factories, etc. :—

Sanitary defects remedied	4
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Shops:—

Sanitary conveniences, drainage and other defects rectified	3
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Miscellaneous Nuisances:—

Drains and sanitary fittings tested	4
Drains repaired or unstopped	4
Noxious effluvia abated	...	...	...	...	1
Offensive accumulations removed	...	...	...	...	13
Van and shed dwellers: contraventions rectified					2
Animal keeping nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	2
Other defect remedied	...	...	...	...	1

Smoke Abatement:—

Complaints of smoke nuisances investigated	...	...	...	...	6
Observations of chimney emissions recorded	...	...	...	...	18
Visits to boiler, etc., plants	...	...	...	...	23
Nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	4

Considerable reduction in smoke emission has been effected in several instances, and in two cases orders have been placed for improved equipment.

Public Mortuary:—

The building in King's Road is owned by the Council and was in use on one occasion during the year. The regular cleansing and hygienic maintenance of these premises are carried out by the Disinfecting Officer.

Disinfection and Disinfestation:—

Infected rooms fumigated	...	...	...	...	121
Verminous rooms treated	...	...	...	...	199
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc.:—					
Steam disinfected	...	...	...	...	63
Destroyed	...	...	...	...	102
Other articles disinfected, etc.	...	...	...	...	119
Number of instances of bug infestation:—					
Council Houses	...	...	...	...	0
Other Houses	...	...	...	...	4
Other infestations of domestic insect pests treated:—					
Ants	...	...	...	...	35
Cockroaches	...	...	...	...	5
Fleas	...	...	...	...	1
Flies	...	...	...	...	5
Silver Fish	...	...	...	...	4
Wasps	...	...	...	...	41
Wood boring insects	...	...	...	...	27
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	5

Rats and Mice Destruction:—

During the year, a systematic inspection of all premises in the district has been completed for the fourth year in succession by the Council's Rats Officer, who combines the duties of Disinfecting Officer. During these visits, attention is given to the improvement of conditions under which poultry and pigs are kept, the repair and ratproofing of buildings and the removal of refuse.

The sewerage system again received a complete treatment, and a comparison of the successful results achieved in the last five years is indicated below:—

Year.	Number of Manholes baited	Number of manholes where takes of pre-bait were recorded.
1945	349	59
1946	350	27
1947	369	13
1948	375	8
1949	375	0

A similar treatment was applied for the first time to the storm water drainage system, involving 78 manholes. Of these, six showed the presence of rats, and poisoned bait was therefore laid with good results.

An abbreviated summary of the work accomplished during the year is appended:—

Premises visited	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,614
Repeat visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,911
Infestations dealt with:—Rats	186	Mice	42	...	...	...	228
(1) At Council properties	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
(2) At private dwellings (free of charge)	...	...	...	...	...	...	159
(3) At business premises (occupiers charged)	...	...	...	...	...	...	51
Estimated number of rats killed (Ministry Formula)	2,392						
Dead bodies recovered:—Rats	234	Mice	356	...	...	...	590

Special Classes of Premises and Occupations subject to Control:—

Written consent to establishment of trade of Rag and Bone Dealer renewed	...	...	...	...	...	1
Written consent to establishment of trade of Fat Extractor, Fat Melter and Glue Maker in operation	...	...	...	...	...	1

These premises were visited on twenty occasions during the year, and conditions were usually found to be satisfactory. One contravention of the Bye-laws was rectified.

Storage of Petroleum Spirit:—

Number of Licences issued	...	...	...	...	...	3
Number of Licences renewed	...	...	...	...	...	32
Number of Licences transferred	...	...	...	...	...	0
Number of contraventions rectified	...	...	...	...	...	10

No Licences have been issued for the storage of Carbide of Calcium.

Swimming Bath:—

The Council's indoor swimming pool is well equipped and provides excellent facilities for bathers during the Summer. The establishment was again well attended by the general public, schools and organised parties. The water is purified by a continuous filtration and chlorination plant, and daily tests are made for chlorine content. A sample taken for bacteriological examination in the height of the Season showed the water to be sterile.

HOUSING.

During the year, forty-four houses have been erected, as follows:—

	Council.	Private Enterprise.
Pre-fabricated—temporary	...	0
Pre-fabricated—permanent	...	0
Permanent construction	...	27 17

The total number of Post-War Houses completed is 183.

In addition, one house was converted into two flats.

At the close of the year, forty-one permanent houses were in course of construction, *viz.* 34 by the Council and 7 by private enterprise.

The total applicants for Council Houses number some 500, a large proportion of whom are living in rooms and require a separate house.

The time is not yet opportune for dealing with houses which are in a serious state of disrepair or are beyond repair or improvement. In the meantime, lists of houses falling within these categories are being compiled for consideration at the appropriate time.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	145
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose					162
(2) (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932	...	...			0
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose					0

(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	0
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	53
<i>2.—Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices.</i>						
	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	...	...	...	...	46
<i>3.—Action under Statutory Powers</i>						
<i>4.—Housing Act 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.</i>						
(1)	(a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year	...	...	...	...	28
	(b) Number of families dwelling therein	...				37
	(c) Number of persons dwelling therein	...				218
(2)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	31
(3)	(a) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...	16
	(b) Number of persons concerned in such cases	...				120
(4)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	...	...	...	...	0
(5)	Number of cases where sleeping accommodation is inadequate, although the houses are not legally overcrowded	...	...	...	...	150

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply :—

The Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, and other enactments came into operation on October 1st. From this date duties in connection with the production of milk were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries from District Councils, and the latter continued to exercise supervision over milk distribution and retail sale. Also the control of pasteurising plants was transferred to the County Council.

Trade.			No. on Register	
			Before 1.10.49	After 1.10.49
Cowkeepers	...	...	8	
Dairymen and Purveyors of Milk (other than Cowkeepers)	...		3	
Farms and other premises	...	...	18	
Distributors of Milk	...	...		3
Dairies (not being Dairy Farms)	...			3

The following Licences have been issued under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders 1936 and 1941, and continued to operate to 31st December, 1949:—

“Tuberculin Tested”—Dealer’s Bottling	...	1
“Tuberculin Tested”—Dealer’s	...	2
“Pasteurised” (Plant)	...	1
“Pasteurised” Supplementary (Retailing)	...	1

Milk Sampling:—

Grade.		Number of Samples for bacteriological examination.	Number Satisfactory.	Number Unsatisfactory
“Tuberculin Tested”	...	13	11	2
“Accredited”	...	4	4	0
“Pasteurised”	...	23	17	6
Ungraded	...	8	7	1
	Totals	48	39	9
		—	—	—

The pasteurising plant previously reported upon as needing replacement continued to function until October, when the new plant was completed and commenced to operate. The latter is of the latest type embodying the high-temperature-short-time process, and the design of the building and general lay-out of the apparatus and equipment attain a high standard. Seventeen samples of milk were taken from the old plant and four of these failed to satisfy the methylene blue test and one of the four also did not comply with the phosphatase test. Samples from the new plant were all satisfactory.

Of the remaining five unsatisfactory samples, two were of Pasteurised milk and two of Tuberculin Tested milk received from outside the district, and one of ordinary milk from a local producer. Investigations were made into the cause and the persons concerned were notified with the result that subsequent samples proved to be satisfactory.

One hundred and twenty visits of inspection were made to premises where milk is produced, treated or stored for sale, and the following defects were rectified:—

Cleansing	...	...	...	...	...	2
Structural Alterations	...	...	...	...	...	1
Equipment and Apparatus	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other items	...	...	...	...	...	2

Ice Cream:—

Trade.	Number of Premises Registered.			
Manufacture and retail	2
Manufacture only	1
Retail only	13

Seventeen samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Laboratory for examination by the Methylene Blue Test, and the reports in comparison with those of the previous two years were as follows:—

		1947	1948	1949
Grade 1	...	...	12	19
Grade 2	...	...	2	12
Grade 3	...	...	2	5
Grade 4	...	...	5	0
	Totals	—	—	—
		21	36	17
		—	—	—

It will be seen that the improvement of the previous year has been maintained.

Thirteen samples of ice cream were collected under the Ministry of Food Scheme whereby manufacturers gave undertakings that their ice cream would conform to a minimum fat content of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ in order to qualify for the supply of additional ingredients. The reports showed a wide difference in fat content, but only three samples were below the $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ standard. The manufacturers were notified and later samples were well over the limit, and the average fat content of the thirteen samples was 6.6%. All reports of samples were forwarded to the Ministry of Food in compliance with their request.

Fifty inspections of premises and vehicles were made, and retailers and manufacturers showed willing co-operation in maintaining a high standard and installing improved equipment. Two contraventions were rectified.

Meat and other Foods :—

The year under review constitutes the tenth successive year of centralised slaughtering under the control of the Ministry of Food in the Council's Abattoir, in Springfield Street. During this period a total of 72,098 animals have been slaughtered. These premises also serve as the distributing centre for the supply of meat to the Urban District and parts of three adjoining Rural Districts. Recently the latter area was enlarged, and this has resulted in an increase of 25% in meat supplied from this establishment.

During 1949, the number of animals slaughtered totalled 6,902. As before, all carcases and organs were subjected to routine inspection before allocation for retail sale. The total weight of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was 25 tons 2 cwts. 2 qrs. 9 lbs., and necessitated the issue of 185 Certificates.

Fourteen Licences to Slaughter were renewed.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed and inspected	956	419	529	4,774	224
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—					
Whole carcases condemned	6	11	10	93	4
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	367	148	6	242	52
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	39.0	37.9	3.0	7.0	25.0
Tuberculosis only :—					
Whole carcases condemned	9	24	—	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	95	106	1	—	20
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	10.9	31.0	0.2	—	9.4

A case against a meat vendor for selling meat unfit for human consumption was taken before the Magistrates Court in January and resulted in a fine of £10 being imposed on each of seven charges. A further fine of £75 was imposed at the same time on a charge brought by the Ministry of Food of contravening the Livestock (Restriction of Slaughtering) Order 1947, and the defendant was ordered to pay £11 6s. 4d. costs and £10 towards Advocate's fee.

In addition to routine inspection, doubtful or damaged food-stuffs of many varieties were examined on fifty-six occasions upon receipt of notifications from food traders. The total quantity of miscellaneous articles found to be unfit for human consumption amounted to 2,550 lbs. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ozs., and entailed the issue of 148 condemn certificates.

The inspection of premises where food is stored or prepared for sale has proceeded as occasion allowed, conditions of cleanliness, etc. have been noted, and several improvements effected. Plans and tenders for improved sanitary accommodation and washing facilities at the Council's Abattoir have been submitted to the Ministries of Food and Health..

Defects remedied at food premises :—

Structural and drainage defects remedied	...	...	...	...	6
Sanitary accommodation provided at cafe	...	...	...	...	1
Improved ventilation provided in cafe kitchen	...	...	...	...	1
Cleansing carried out	...	...	...	...	2
Insect pests treated	...	...	...	...	1
Refuse removed	...	...	...	...	2
Food exposed to contamination	...	...	...	...	1
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	...	5

Cysticercus Bovis.

Throughout the country, meat inspectors are exercising vigilance with a view to co-operation in the eradication of this disease. Consequently, three notifications were received from other Abattoirs that six cattle, which had previously passed through the Market Harborough Collecting Centre, upon post-mortem examination had revealed Cysticercus Bovis infestation. Thorough investigation into the history of these animals was conducted, but the origin of the infection could not be traced. Apparently, four of them originated in Ireland, in another instance complete records were not available and in the remaining case conditions appeared to be satisfactory. No similar instances were discovered during meat inspection at the Local Abattoir.

Food Poisoning Outbreak.

One food poisoning outbreak was investigated during the year. This occurred at a hostel for displaced persons and consisted of thirty cases; there were no deaths. The symptoms of illness were mild and of short duration. The suspected food was minced beef and polonies, and a sample of the latter, together with specimens of faeces, throat and nasal swabs from nine food handlers and affected persons were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Leicester, for examination. The investigation resulted in the isolation of *Staphylococcus Aureus* (Coagulase Positive) type 3A/3B/3C/51 from the food sample and a nasal swab of one food handler. The outbreak was considered due to a breakdown in the refrigeration plant and this was subsequently remedied.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifications:—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	28	Measles	...	...	...	19
Whooping Cough	...	...	58	Pneumonia	...	...	...	4
Diphtheria	...	...	0	Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	0			Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	0
Acute Polio-myelitis	...	0		Erysipelas	...	...	...	0

Tuberculosis:—

New Cases:—

	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
Male	...	0
Female	...	0
	—	—
	15	0
	—	—

Deaths:—

Male	...	...	...	4	0
Female	...	...	...	1	1
	—	—	—	5	1
	—	—	—	—	—

Yours faithfully,

S. P. STOKER,

Medical Officer of Health.

B. G. ELLIOTT,

Sanitary Inspector.

